



DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov>



November 26, 2003

Dear Marine Recreational Fishery Participants and Interested and Affected Parties:

You recently received a letter informing you of a recreational fishery closure for lingcod, rockfish, and California scorpionfish that was to go into effect on November 21, 2003. The letter also provided notice of the closure of the commercial California sheephead fishery effective on the same date.

A recent court ruling imposed a temporary restraining order halting the implementation of this recreational closure. The court concluded that affected parties had not been given adequate notice of the closure as required by regulation. As a result, the Department is issuing a revised closure notification with a new effective date. The public and Commission notification required by regulation was provided by news release on November 25, 2003.

This letter is being sent as a courtesy to inform you of the new recreational closure date. **The recreational fishery for lingcod, rockfish, and California scorpionfish will be closed in state waters effective midnight, Monday, December 8, 2003** pursuant to Title 14, CCR §27.82. The closure will apply to all recreational fishing activity for these species in all waters for the remainder of the calendar year, and include all methods of take.

This closure action conforms to recent in-season management actions taken by the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) to limit groundfish catches in an effort to protect fish stocks and to provide future fishing opportunities. The court order does not affect the related federal closure.

The Fish and Game Commission (Commission) also took emergency action to close recreational fishing for ocean whitefish and federal groundfish species not included in the state's closure action described above. The emergency action is intended to reduce bycatch of species in the fisheries slated for closure mentioned above and to conform to the Council groundfish actions. The fisheries affected by the Commission's emergency action will remain open in state waters until the action is filed with the Secretary of State.

Anglers are advised to check the Department's website for the most up to date regulations at www.dfg.ca.gov/mrd. For more complete information on the full scope of Council actions see www.pcouncil.org.

The Department is asking fishermen voluntarily not to fish for any these species until these closures go into effect.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Deb Wilson-Vandenberg, Research Manager at (831) 649-2892 of the Department's Marine Region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia Woy".